



CITY OF LODI

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

AGENDA TITLE: Presentation of Certificate of Recognition to Alison Wong-Bertsch with Memories for the Making

MEETING DATE: September 18, 2002

PREPARED BY: Janet L. Hamilton

RECOMMENDATION: None


BACKGROUND: Scrap-booking supply store *Memories for the Making* has been selected by *Better Homes and Gardens Magazine* as one of the 10 best scrapbook supply stores in the Country.

The Magazine's annual Scrapbook Shop Sampler honors owner Alison Wong-Bertsch with a nine-page spread (Exhibit A) that documents the establishment of the Lockeford Street store in 1998, its dedicated staff, and creative product line. It also boasts a complimentary profile of the City of Lodi.

The City of Lodi applauds Ms. Wong-Bertsch for her dedication and welcomes the national exposure her efforts have brought to our region.


FUNDING: None.

Respectfully submitted,


H. Dixon Flynn
City Manager

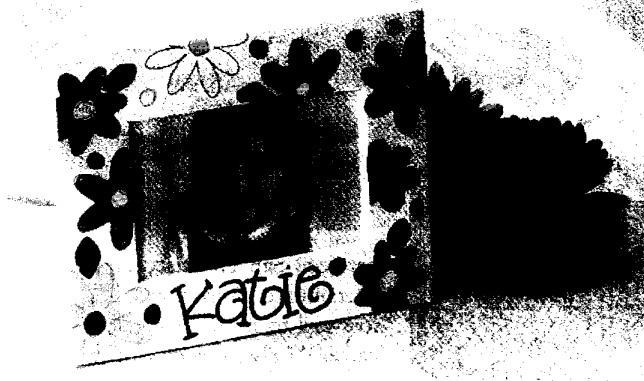
Attachments

APPROVED:


H Dixon Flynn - City Manager

SNEAK PEEK

- **Owner:** Alison Wong
- **Location:** Lodi, California
- **Established:** 1998
- **Highlights:** Personalized gifts and make-and-takes, monthly recipe swaps, extensive class schedule



memories for the Making

Above and Left: Memories for the Making is not only a fully stocked scrapbooking supply store, but also carries a line of ready-made personalized gifts, including flower pots, photo frames and a built-in lunch boxes, and desk organizers.

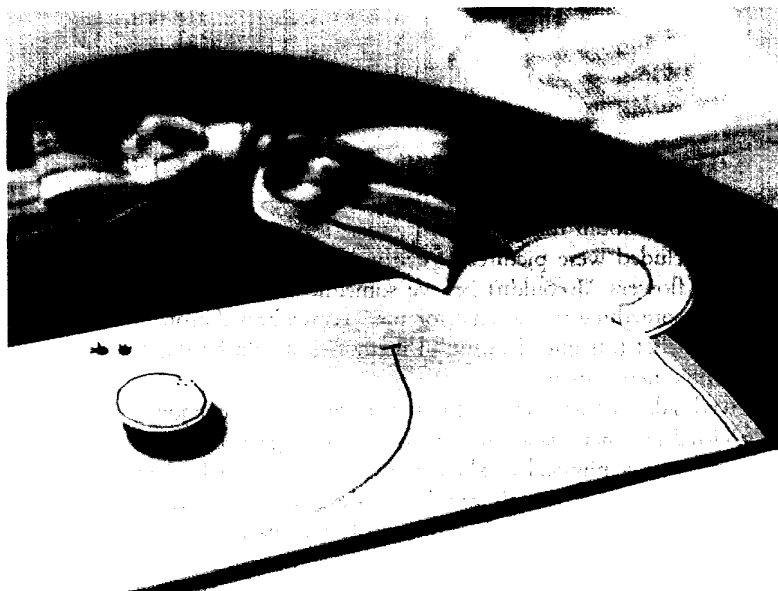
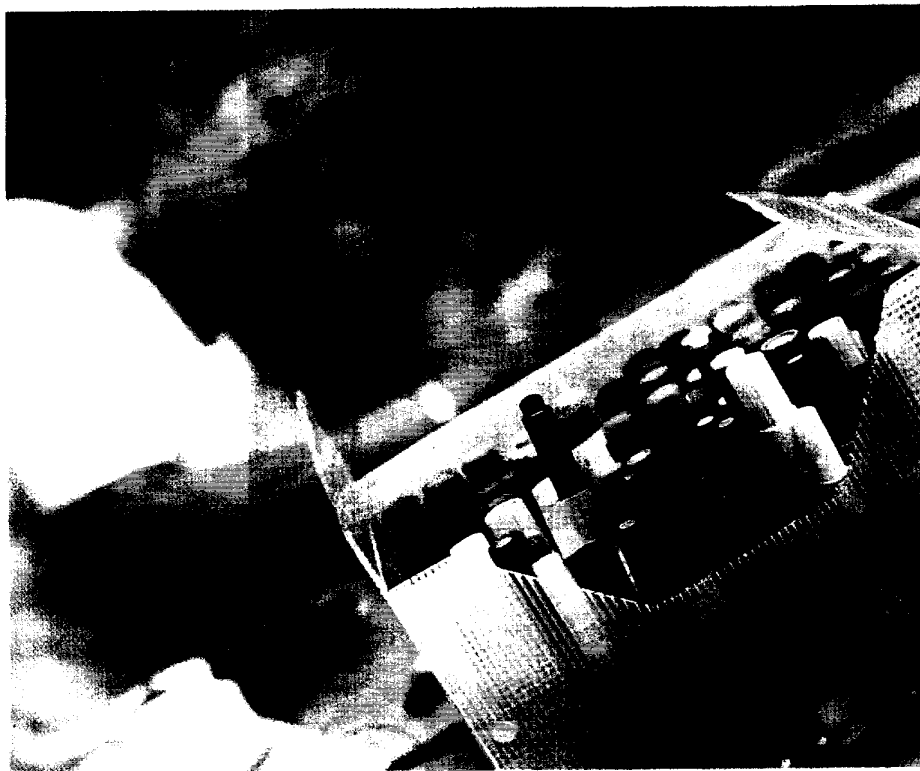
IT ALL STARTED WITH THE WEDDING GIFT

Alison Wong received from her best friend Laurie Patraitis-Carroll—a personalized scrapbook album that recounted all the steps of preparing for her wedding. Included were pictures of every detail, from trying on dresses to selecting flowers. “I couldn’t believe someone would spend that much time making something this special for me,” remembers Alison. Little did she know that this gift of beautiful memories would be the beginning of a whole new career.

Still a newlywed, Alison was tiring of the travel demands of her job as a marketing/visual merchandising director for a Los Angeles-based company. Not only was it physically exhausting for her, but her husband John was growing weary of it as well. She knew she wanted something different and closer to their home in the northern California town of Lodi, but what?

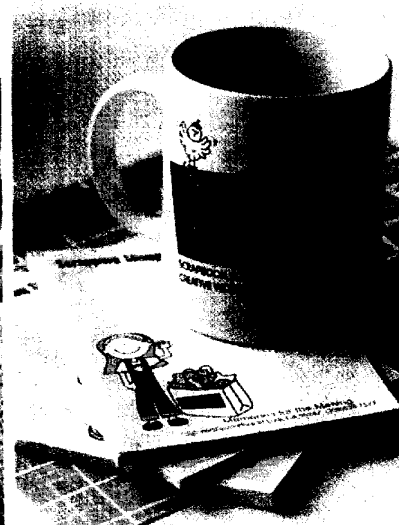
Although she’d been scrapbooking with her friend Laurie for about six months prior to the wedding, it wasn’t until Alison was flipping through the pages of the album Laurie had so lovingly put together that Alison realized her hobby had become an obsession. She quit her job in L.A. and focused her efforts on opening a scrapbook shop in Lodi, located

Written by Joleen Ross | Photographs by Edward Thomas, Dean Tanner



Top: Customers use the store's well-lit classroom space to decorate gifts or make scrapbook pages.

Above: Store designer Michelle King constructed this adorable paper embellishment and designs the store's custom signs.



between San Francisco and Sacramento. Alison was looking forward to more than just a new career. "I also was sick of driving two hours to the nearest store for my own supplies," she explains.

"It looked kind of frightening," Alison admits, thinking of the first time she laid eyes on the building that would become her store's home. She was having breakfast at her favorite diner when she noticed that the space next door was vacant.

"It needed lots of work, but I knew it would be worth it because of the location," she says. She rented the space the next day and enlisted everyone she could find to help with the renovation. Longtime friends Doris and Ray Shates were the first to answer her plea. They tore down walls, replaced drywall, and painted. Soon a whole crew of friends and family was pitching in around the clock. "Without their help, we'd never have been able to get the store off the ground," says Alison.

Nine months later, the space had been transformed into Memories for the Making. In a place of honor just inside the front door hangs a plaque dedicating the store to her first two volunteers. "A special thanks to Doris and Ray, whose endless support made this store possible," recites Alison.

The store's simple, cheerful look is no accident. Products are arranged by theme and are always easy to view against the pale yellow walls with blue trim. A customer once exclaimed, "You can actually see the trees in this forest!" Even though there's a lot to take in, the setting is soothing and inspiring. Alison loves the look on the faces of new customers. "When people from far away come in, they're almost always excited because things are so different."

As a passionate scrapbooker herself, Alison knows what her customers are looking for—tried-and-true products along with cutting-edge trends. "We don't try to carry everything available—just the neatest stuff and coolest ideas," says Alison. Instead of getting "bigger and better," she believes in getting "smarter and better."

One of the most popular draws at Memories for the Making is the wide array of make-and-takes. These prepackaged kits include

the kit includes
everything
available just the
kit includes all the
kit includes all the

everything needed to make a project from start to finish and are perfect for beginners who don't know where to start as well as seasoned veterans who want a quick approach. The kits are created by the store's top designer, Michelle King, and Alison feels fortunate to be able to showcase her talents. "She's so amazing, and her designs

are exclusive to our store," she says. "She's a tremendous asset."

Then there's the charming line of personalized gifts that's particularly popular during the holidays. "A lot of customers come in just for our personalized gifts, and many of them aren't even scrapbookers," says Alison. The gifts are easy to make, yet leave a lasting impression. (After all, it was a personalized gift that got the whole store launched.)

Not only is the store full of fresh and innovative ideas, it's run by an incredible staff of lively women (and two muscle-men husbands) who are always ready to welcome new customers and old friends. And in honor of Doris Shates, whose help was so invaluable when the store first opened, Alison has named an

annual award after her good friend. "It's a way to keep her spirit here all the time," says Alison. This award is bestowed upon the staff member who exhibits the most "Doris-like" customer service.

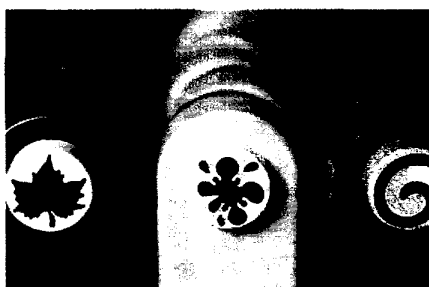
Alison boasts that her staff is made up of her "best customers." Indeed, the first customer to walk through the door on opening day later became her first employee. Her staff members all work part-time, and almost all of them hold down other jobs in the community.

"The running joke is that you have to have a graduate degree to work at the store," jokes Alison, since most of the women hold master's degrees. "My mom, who has a doctorate in education, even works on Fridays!" Not only do all her employees share a mutual addiction to scrapbooking, they also share the same values—love of family and friends and a desire to make memories last.

Alison and her staff are especially proud of the line of toppers and die cuts they design exclusively for the store—something unique for their customers. Imaginative, staff-created layouts are posted throughout the store, providing customers with fresh ideas and showcasing new techniques. Not sure how to use wire or what eyelets are for? The staff is always there to show you the way, and they'll go out of their way to demonstrate exactly how it's done. One of the best things about owning a scrapbook store is "being able to see the breadth of product firsthand," says Alison. "The hardest part is staying on top of it."

Memories for the Making is a dynamic little shop constantly buzzing with classes, conversation, and creativity. Not only does it offer a broad spectrum of courses that teaches the newest techniques, but it also brings in celebrity instructors once a year for demonstrations.

Bottom: Once a month, customers gather to taste treats and make recipe pages for their custom cookbooks.





Alison says that her card-making class is by far the most popular, but her personal favorite is the creative lettering class. "It's hands-on—lots of physical contact with the paper," she says.

The monthly recipe swap is another favorite event at Memories for the Making. A theme is chosen, and 12 customers bring in their page layouts, along with a prepared dish and copies of the recipe. Everyone goes home with tasty recipes, fresh ideas, and of course, a satisfied tummy.

The customers of Memories for the Making are as varied as the class offerings. Most are stay-at-home moms who just want to

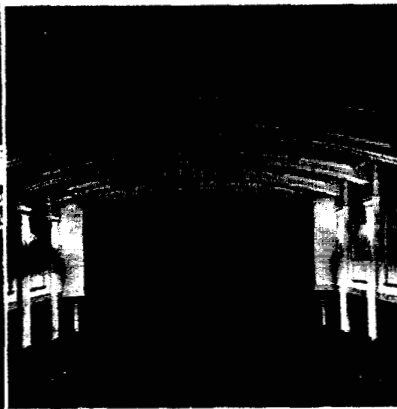
do something special with family photos. But the shop also has an increasing number of younger scrapbookers who have their own stories to tell. All this creativity is rewarded monthly on the shop's Web site, where the Scrapbooker of the Month is featured.

Regular customer Wendy Buchanan calls Memories for the Making "a soul-satisfying kind of place." To Alison, that's high praise. As she runs her fingers over the cover of the wedding album she received years ago, she's reminded of just how soul-satisfying memories can be. ■

Store project on page 40

Memories for the Making's staff includes, from left, front row: Elena Viscovich, Amy Purdy, and Alison Wong; second row, Whitney Higgs, Doris Shates, and Kathryn Shimane; back row, Ray Shates, Colleen Petrot, Amye Quarles, and Ann Thomas. Not pictured: Jenny VanExel, Amy Terra, and Michelle King.

Visit Memories for the Making at 1325 W. Lockeford St., Lodi, CA 95242; 209/333-7577; fax: 209/305-7577; e-mail: alison@memoriesforthemaking.com; Web site: www.memoriesforthemaking.com. Shop hours: Tuesday–Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Closed Monday.



lodi, california

1 Lodi started its **Sandhill Crane Festival** in 1997. The three-day event occurs every November during the peak time for Sandhill Crane migration to the area. Visitors can participate in events like expert-guided tours and wildlife workshops. Canoeing is offered on the nearby lakes and family-friendly programs include crafts and a giant crane maze. Most activities take place at the Hutchins Street Square. 125 S. Hutchins Street, Lodi, CA 95240; 209/367-7840; www.lodichamber.com/cranefestival.html

2 The **Hutchins Street Square** is a former high school building that now serves as Lodi's Community Center. The building has a 789-seat performing arts theater, an Olympic-size pool, and a number of office facilities. Concerts, plays, and art shows are held monthly. 125 S. Hutchins Street, Lodi, CA 95240; 209/333-6892; www.lodi.gov/html/hutchins_street_square.htm

3 Billed as the place to stay in Lodi, the **Wine and Roses Country Inn and Restaurant** serves as more than just a place to sleep. The hotel has been in existence since 1902, and each room has been decorated with

antiques, collectibles, and freshly cut flowers. Late night wine tastings, a continental breakfast, and fresh home-baked cookies are included with your stay. 2505 W. Turner Road, Lodi, CA 95242; 209/334-6998; www.winerose.com

Lodi boasts an impressive number of wineries and has designated a strip of its land as the **Lodi Wine Trail**. Generations of growers have kept the family-owned vineyards alive for decades, and new winemakers are discovering the area every year. Visitors stopping at any of the wineries along the trail will find tasting rooms, information on wine making, and beautiful vineyard views. Visitors can start their tour at the Lodi Wine & Visitor Center. 2545 W. Turner Road, Lodi, CA 95242; www.lodiwine.com

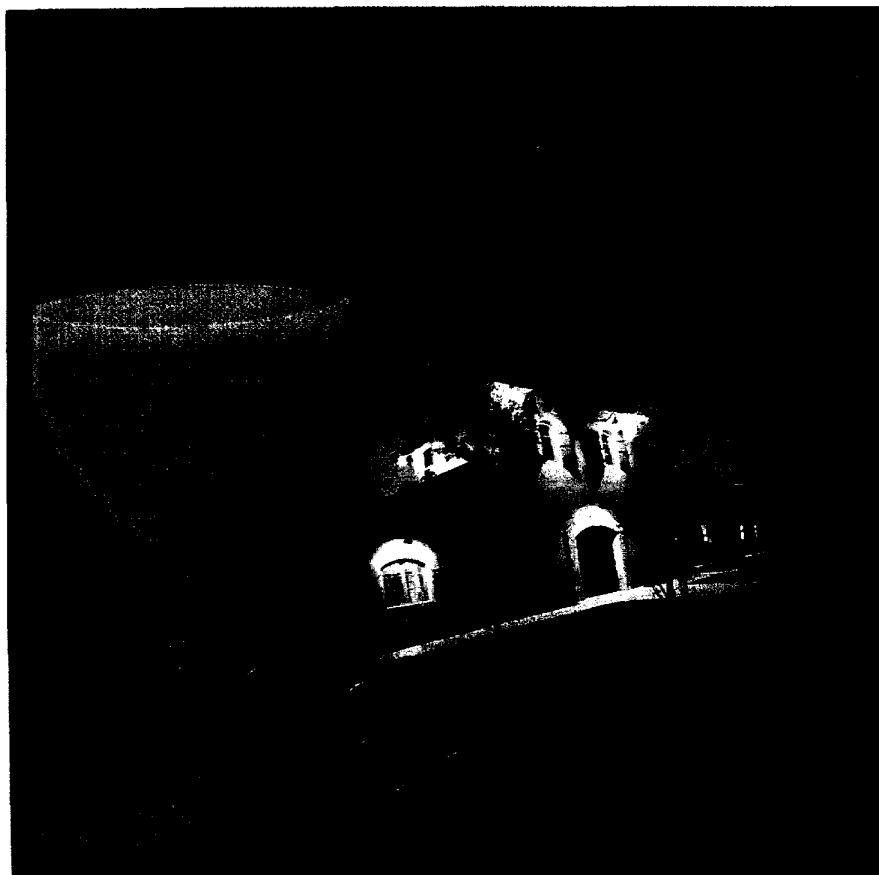
The **Lodi Street Faire** involves around 700 vendors selling everything from antiques to arts and crafts. Two dozen food vendors also participate in the event. The Street Faire takes up a 10-square block area and comes to life on the first Sundays of May and October. 35 S. School Street, Lodi, CA 95240; 209/367-7840; www.lodichamber.com/streetfaire.html

Exhibits on Indian culture, early agriculture, the wine and grape industry, and early settlement can be found at the **San Joaquin County Historical Museum**. Collections from various estates in the area have been brought together to form an assortment of more than 50,000 items that represent the development of the San Joaquin County. Audiences of 15 or more can request presentations on historical issues, and detailed slide shows are also offered for a fee. 11793 N. Micke Grove Road, Lodi CA 95240; 209/331-2055; www.sanjoaquinhistory.org

Lodi's **Micke Grove Park** is home to a variety of entertainment options. The Japanese Garden often hosts small wedding ceremonies and is filled with cherry blossoms in the springtime. The Micke Grove Zoo is home to more than 180 animals, including such exotic creatures as a Chinese Alligator and radiated tortoises from Madagascar. The 258-acre park also houses an auditorium, picnic shelters, and Funderwoods Park with amusement rides. 11793 N. Micke Grove Road, Lodi, CA; www.co.san-joaquin.ca.us/mgzoo

MATERIALS

- One 4x6 horizontal photo
- Two travel brochures
- Three 12x12" sheets of dark purple card stock
- Two 12x12" sheets of light purple card stock
- One 12x12" sheet each of dark green and medium green card stock
- Two 8½x11" sheets of white vellum
- One 8½x11" sheet of purple striped paper
- Purple fine-line pen
- Assorted ¾", ½", and ¼" purple buttons
- One ¾" brown button
- One ½" brown button
- One 12" length of white organdy ribbon
- One 1" maple leaf punch
- One 2" maple leaf punch
- ⅝" anywhere eyelet punch
- ¾" high alphabet punches or a ¾" high lettering template or ¾" high purple letter stickers
- Four ⅝" purple eyelets
- Eyelet setter
- Rubber mallet
- Self-healing cutting mat
- Brass wire
- Screwdriver
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Adhesive dots



Livable Lovable Lodi

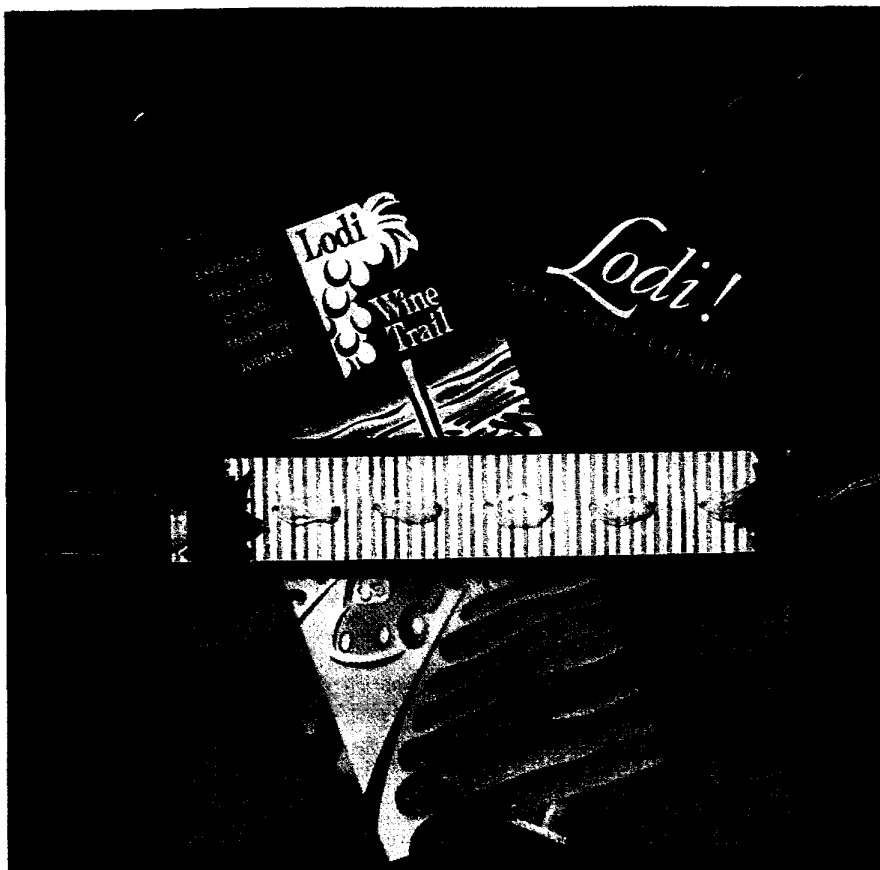
1 Trim ½" off one side and ¼" off the top of both sheets of light purple card stock. Center and adhere them to the sheets of dark purple card stock.

2 Use the alphabet punches or lettering template to cut letters from a sheet of dark purple card stock. (You can also use purple letter stickers to save time.) Cut mats for the title letters from medium green card stock in the following sizes: 4⅞x1¾", 5½x1¾", and 3¾x1¾". Attach the letters to the green mats substituting the letter "o" in "Lovable" and in "Lodi" with purple buttons. Use a small purple button to top the lowercase "i" in "Livable." (Use glue dots to secure the buttons in place.) Mat each piece of green card stock with dark purple card

stock and trim to ¼" on all sides. Position and attach to the background card stock.

3 Use a pencil to sketch the wineglass and cut one from a sheet of white vellum. Cut the wine shape from a piece of burgundy card stock and adhere to the back of the vellum wineglass. Adhere both to the background card stock.

4 Punch jumbo and large leaves from the dark green and medium green card stock. Adhere several jumbo leaf punches at the base of the wineglass. Use the purple buttons to make a grape cluster that overlaps the wineglass stem. Add a brown button at the top of the cluster to serve as the stem. (Attach the buttons with glue dots.)



Sources: Patterned paper by Susan Branch for Colorbok Paper Products. Buttons by Magic Scraps. Large maple leaf punch by Punch Bunch. Jumbo maple leaf punch by Marvy Uchida. Paper Shaper Alphabet punches by EK Success Ltd. Eyelets by Doodlebug Design Inc.

❏ Curl brass wire around a screwdriver or pen or pencil to make the wire coils. Slip the straight end of each coil underneath one of the buttons that makes up the grape cluster and adhere with adhesive tabs.

❏ Mat the photo on dark purple card stock, trimming to $\frac{1}{2}$ " on all sides; adhere to the background.

❏ Cut an $8 \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ " rectangle of white vellum for the pocket; attach to the page with purple eyelets (see Setting Eyelets, right) and add small purple buttons. Cut an $8\frac{3}{4} \times 1\frac{3}{4}$ " strip of striped paper; mat on a 9×2 " strip of dark purple card stock. Punch 11 evenly spaced holes through both the striped paper and dark purple

card stock using a $\frac{1}{8}$ " hole punch; weave ribbon through the holes. Adhere to the top of the vellum pocket. Adhere the large leaves and small buttons to cover the points where the ribbon stops and starts.

❏ Make a smaller grape cluster in the top right corner of the right page in the same manner as the large cluster.

❏ Curl a length of brass wire and attach to the title blocks, wrapping around the buttons.

*Designed by Amy Terra and Whitney Higgs
of Memories for the Making*

setting eyelets

❏ Determine where you want the eyelet; mark the position with a pencil. Make sure your work surface is flat and stable. If you're using an anywhere punch, protect the work surface with a self-healing cutting mat.

❏ Make the eyelet hole with a long-reach hole punch or an anywhere punch and a rubber mallet. If you're using the anywhere punch, strike firmly but with minimal force—you're not driving railroad spikes!

❏ Place an eyelet in the hole and turn the paper facedown on the work surface. Place the end of the eyelet setter into the hole on the back of the eyelet. Tap lightly with the rubber mallet, applying even pressure to all the edges of the eyelet.

❏ Once the edges have started to bend, remove the setter and tap the eyelet lightly with the rubber mallet. This will guarantee that the back of the eyelet is as flat as possible.